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1609. 1. 9.
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Brief Conclusions

of Dancers and Dancing.

Condemning the prophane vse thereof;
and commending the excellencie of such Persons
which haue from Age to Age, in all solemne
Feasts, and victorious Triumphs, used that
(no lesse) Honourable, Commendable
and laudable Recreation;

As also true Physicall obseruations for the
preseruatiō of the body in health, by
the vse of the same Exercise.

Written by *I. L. Roscio.*

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Imprinted at London, for *Iohn Orphindrange*, and
are to bee sold at his shop by the Cocks and
Katherine wheele neere *Holbourne bridge*.

1609.

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and commending the excellencie of such Persons
which have been in all times



Printed at London for John Oughton, and
are to be sold at his shop by the Gate and
Katherine wheate street Holborn bridge.
1699.



THE PRINTER TO

the Reader.



*Et mee now entreate thee,
courteous & tractable Rea-
der, not to stay thy minde
upon the word, Dances:
but to make thy recourse
thorow the matters, which
are deduced under that title.
For what cause? Otherwise
the subiect of this purpose, as I thinke, shall seeme
unto thy iudgement, to be vaine and friuolous,
whereas of it selfe, it is altogether serious, and
of a great moment. Heare mee a little. The Au-
thor of this Treatise concerning Dances, doth not
lay the foundation of his arguments upon his
owne opinion, nor upon the fantastick imagi-
nations of some others: but upon the word of
GOD it selfe, which is comprehended in the
Holy Bookes of the Olde and Newe Testaments.*

The Printer to the Reader.

The which thing may verie plainly be discerned, by the union, or congruittie of this small Treatise, being not framed according to the pleasure of the eye, but for the comfort of the heart: In which comfort these holy men and women (which he hath named, and before our eyes heere erected) magnified the most mightie Creator of all visible and inuisible creatures, holding it to bee their dutie, not onely privately to laud and reioyce in him for the victories they received: but also, to stirre up the people (which they ruled,) by the actiuaes and agilitie of their bodies in Dances, to praise and laud the immortall marker of their triumphs: Therefore bee thou instructed by the doctrine here contained: and the Lord haue thee alwaies under his protection.

Your friend

JOHN DEKENSTRANGE.



CONCLUSIONS V P O N D A N C E S, B O T H O F T H I S A G E A N D O F T H E O L D.

Three diuers opinions of learned men, concerning Dances.



Great is the diuersitie of opinions about the vsage of dances, euen as it is about a thousand other matters of no slender importance. Some men of good vnderstanding and literature, doe affirme dances to bee holy of themselves: and their chiefe allegation regardeth the sixt Chapter of the second booke of *Samuel*, where it is written, that the Prophet *Dauid* danced before the Arke of the Lord, when it was carried from the house of *Obed-Edom* to the Citie of *Dauid*, with shouting and sound of Trumpet. Many others doe maintaine, that such an exercise is prophane: and doe principally inferre out of the

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32. chapter of *Exodus*, that the corrupted *Israelites* did dance in their idolatrie about the molten Calfe, which they compelled *Aaron* to make. But after the iudgement of the greater number, it is a thing altogether indifferent: and their highest argument doth embrace one speech of Christ in the 7. chap. of the Gospell according to Saint *Luke*, which is this, *They are like vnto little children sitting in the market place, and crying one to another, and saying, VVee haue piped vnto you, and ye haue not danced: wee haue mourned vnto you, and you haue not wept.* Let the hearers and readers open their mindes vnto vs, or vnto others, vpon such diuersities.

It may easily be perceiued, in marking some places of the Old and New Testaments, that the holinesse, prophanation, and indifferencie of dances, must be considered vpon the causes of dancing. Wherefore wee are minded to set downe, by the permission of the Almighty, some instructiue observations touching that purpose.

Of
32. Chap. B

Vpon DANCES.

Of the Dances vsed in the
Old Age, and formerly of
the holy.



That Dance was holy; which, as we read in the 15. chap. of *Exodus*, was effected by *Miriam* the Prophetesse, sister of *Aaron* and *Moses*, with all the other *Israelitish* women, when God had miraculously destroyed their deadly foes the *Aegyptians*, to wit, King *Pharao* and his mightie hoste, in overthrowing and drowning them all at once in the red Sea. For they danced in singing prayes vnto God for their deliuerance: and so the cause of their dancing was godly, and consequently the dance it selfe was holy. That Dance was holy likewise, which the Scripture sheweth vs in the 11. chap. of *Judges*, when *Iptah* had vanquished his aduersaries the *Ammonites*, and returned to his house: which *Ammonites* had bene verie cruel oppressors of the *Israelits* eighteen years.

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For the daughter of *Zaphrah* with her companions went out to meete her father, and danced in magnifying the Lord, because he had giuen him the victorie ouer his enemies.

Is not the like argument to be framed vpon the like subiect, in the 18. chap. of the first book of *Samuel*? We see there, how that the women of *Israel* came out of all their Cities, to honour *David* returning from the slaughter of *Goliath* the Philistine; and how that they danced in giuing glorie to the Almighty, because hee had auenged his people *Israel* of their foes the *Philistines*, which were slaundering and blaspheming idolaters. And the 15. Chapter of the booke of *Judith* doth confirme this matter of dancing, in that it manifesteth the Dances of that most vertuous, godly, and valiant widow *Judith*, after she had saued the Citie of *Bethulia*, and discomfited the *Persians*, *Medes*, and all the rest, by smiting off, with her heroi-call hand, the head of *Olofernes*, chiefe Captaine of *Nabuchodonosor* King of the *Affyrians*.

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- of his enemies, and returned to
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cruel oppressors of the *Israelites* eighteen years.
For

Vpon DANCES.

Vpon what occasions, in the
Old Age, the dances were
vsed.

Now euerie man may
learne by those premis-
ses, that the godly wo-
men of *Israel* did dance
publikly, after some great
victorie, in praying and
glorifying the name of
the Lord for the same:
and that they did not vse that kinde of exercise
with any minde toward some worldly pleasure.
But was it onely about victories? It was also a-
bout the celebration of some solempne feast
consecrated vnto God: as we haue the example
thereof in the 23. Chap. of *Judges*. For the
Elders of *Israel* having no wives for two hun-
dredth men of *Beniamin*, had them goe to *Shiloh*,
where a feast of the Lord was celebrated euery
yeare; saying, Goe and lye in wait in the Vine-
yards, and when ye see the daughters of *Shiloh*
come out to dance in Dances, then come yee
out of the Vineyardes, and catch you euery
man.

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man a wife of the daughters of *Shiloh*, and goe into the land of *Beniamin*. So ye may clearly see, that the vsage of dancing was not onely ordained for victories, but also for solemne feasts: and that a conclusion may be gathered out of it, to be lawfull to reioyce with dances, at the time of mariages, and of all other holy and great occasions. But it were meete and conuenient, ye should alwaies remember one thing: that whensoever the occasions of dancing are holy, then the forme of dancing ought to represent holinesse, as the indifferent doe require indifferencie: the discerning whereof must be left to the iudgement of godly and well learned persons.

¶ Wee doe not adde to this place the historie contained in the sixt chap. of the second booke of *Samuel*, which saith, That the Prophet *David* danced before the Arke of God: because a doubt may rise thereupon, whether that motion of *David* was a dance, or not. For as in the 82. *Psalme*, and in other doctrines of the holy Bible, Princes and Magistrates are called Gods, because in a manner they bee like vnto God: so that motion of *David* might be taken in the number of dances, because it had some likenesse with them. What is that, which compelleth

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pellet vs to argue in this sort: I pray you, hearken a little. Dances are motions composed with measure: but that motion of *David* was without measure: as it is not difficult so be comprehended, in that he discovered himselfe before his maids, whereupon hee was mocked of his wife *Michal*. What might have beene the cause of such a motion in him? His minde was transported and carried away, through the great vehemencie of the burning zeale, wherewith hee was altogether inflamed.

Of the Vnlawfull Dances, which are commonly cal- led prophane.



As touching prophane Dances, that Dance which the Apostle Saint *Matthew* in the 14. Chapter of his Gospell, writeth to haue beene danced before *Herod* by the daughter of *Herodias*, may be a sufficient testimoniall. There it clearely appeareth to all persons endued with some discretion, that in her Dance

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she had no regard vnto God, but onely vnto Herod: that she might most excellently please the said Herod, to the intent that he should make her some extraordinarie high promise, whereby she might purchase to her selfe the head of Saint Iohn Baptist, for to carrie it to her mother Herodias, which did hate that good Prophet with a deadly hatred. And wee conclude thereupon, that euery dancer and dance-resse, which in their dances haue no remembrance of God, are greatly culpable before the eyes of God himselfe, although they seeme to be without fault in the sight of men.

Wee do not bring hither the dancing mentioned in the 23. Chap. of Exodus: because those stubborn and stiffhearted *Israelites*, which danced about the molten Calfe, were become Idolaters. For it might be in that consideration, that such dances were part of their religion.

the Apostle Saint Paul
in the 14. Chapter
of his Gospel, writeth
to haue bene danced
before Herod by the daugh-



ter of Herod, may be a sufficient testimoniall.
There it clearly appeareth to all persons en-
quied with some direction, that in her Dance
the

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Of such Dances, as

by reason are esteemed to be indifferent.

BVt for the indifferencie of Dances, wee haue the 15. Chapter of the *Euangelist S. Luke*: where our Saviour *Iesus Christ* speaking of the Prodigall Sonne, which had wasted abroad all his portion of Goods, and afterward was returned to his Father, with humble confession of his offence, sayth in good part, & in the narration of a godly deed, that they made great mirth for his sake in the house, with Bankets, Melodie, and Dances. And there that indifferencie of Dancing, is to be more plainly scene in these wordes, *Let vs eate, and be merrie.* King *Salomon* among many indifferent things, which he setteth down for our instruction, in the 3. Chapter of his *Ecclesiastes*, doeth also teach vs this: *That as there is a time to mourne, so there is a time to Dance.* And such a thing may also serue vs heere, for the prooffe of the indifferencie of

C.

Dances

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Dances : concluding besides that, by the last example and doctrine now deduced, that it is not any action displeasing vnto God, to vse *Dances* for an honest recreation, in the ioyfull meetings of faythfull friendes, or deare kinsfolkes; and in all other occasions like vnto that same.

Wee do not vse heere, that comparison of the little Children, inuiting other little Children to *Dance*, comprehended in the 7. Chap. of the Gospell according to *S. Luke*, which comparison the Lord *Iesus* vttered for himselfe, and for the Prophet *S. Iohn Baptist*, against the *Pharises* and *Expounders* of the Law. For it is well known euery where, that many thinges are to be tollerated in Children, which are not to be tollerated in other persons : as the ryding vpon Sticks, and the playing with Babies; with such other foolish pastimes.

What sort of Dancing is more
conuenient for the health.



Mong the indifferent *Dances*, those *Dances* as we thinke, must be numbred, which are practised for the exercise of the body, that thereby the bodily health may be better preserved. Wherefore

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fore in regarding the diuersitie of dispositions, which is founde at all times in the humaine kinde, it will not bee amisse, to set downe one worde in this purpose, to declare what sort of *Dancing* is more conuenient for these, and what for those.

Such *Dances* as doe strongly stirre the body, ought to be chosen of them, which haue some obstructions in the wayes of the Vrine, or some other like impediment. And the contrarie must be vsed of such persons, as doe perceiue their owne Braines to be weake, or the like infirmie to be in some other part. But to the others that *Dancing* is fitter, which exerciseth the bodie in a meane measure of agitation. Therefore let all those persons, which doe ordinarily exercise them selues in *Dances*, carefully obserue and regard the constitutions of their bodyes: to the intent, that they should not vse any kind of *Dancing*, which by repugnancie might be hurtfull to their complexions: Remembring assidually within them selues, and so much the more in this matter, to acknowledge God to be the Author of all good things: because the Apostle *S. Paul* in the 4. Chap. of his first Epistle to *Timotheus* doth condemne the bodily exercise, when it is not accompanied with godlines.

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Of the ordinarie Dances, vsed
euerie where, in these dayes.

Now that we haue handled
the *Dances* of the old Age,
shall wee make euident in
few lines, what wee thinke
of the *Dances* of our dayes?
These *Dances* (I speake of
the greater part of them)
doe seeme vnto our iudge-
ment, to be partly vaine, and partly prophane.
Vaine, because neither men nor women are a-
ble to attaine vnto the knowledge and practise
of the art of such *Dancing*, without vexation of
the Spirit, and losse of time. Prophane, because
in the old age, the women *Danced* to this intent,
that thereby their spirituall Songes and Diuine
prayes should waxe more feruent; and conse-
quently become more acceptable vnto GOD:
wheras now very often, in a great many places,
among the Christians them-selues, not onely
the Women, but also the Men, doe *Dance* to
please the world. Notwithstanding God alone
is hee, which seeth their heartes and intentions:
and without difficultie it may be, that our con-
iectures

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icētures are not sufficiently iudicious.

The vexation of the Spirit is so much spoken against, by that wise *Salomon* in his Booke of *Eccelesiastes*, that it is a wonderfull thing, to see so many, & so many againe, that neuer keepe themselves from the tearing clawes of that monster. And the losse of Time, might be better auoyded, if men would but note the admonition of the Apostle *S. Paul*, in the 5. Chap. of his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, where hee biddeth them *Redeeme the time*: when hee admonisheth them, *To walke circumspectly, not as Fooles; but as Wise, and to vnderstand what the will of the Lord is.*

Moreover, many of those Dances are so much artificiall (at the least within our cogitations, and within the cogitations of some other persons, which haue also obserued in the holy Histories of the old Testament, the manner of Dancing practised among the *Israelitish* women, that liued in the feare of God) many of these Dances (I say) are so much artificiall, that the humaine minde can not be intended nor attentive to the Art of Dancing, and to the prayse of God together.

the Scripture, for the aboundance of all things
flowing of milke and honey (say they) is taken in
this manner. As the
Hence many others do endeuour themselves
to be as *Whence*

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Whether it bee lawfull for men
to dance with women.



Any men doe argue, that
it is lawfull for them, to
dance with women: be-
cause (say they) the Pro-
phet *David* exhorteth vs
in one of his *Psalmes*, to
praise God in *Dances*. But
that argument cannot bee
strong enough. For besides that the *Hebrew*
word doth carry diuers significations, the later
and riper *Translations*, both in *English* and in
other *Languages*, doe not name any *Dances*.
Therefore we would rather counsell them to
take an other way, and sende them to that
Text of the Prophet *Ieremie* in the 31. Chapter.
*The Virgine shall reioyce in the Dance, and the
yong men and the old men together: for I will turne
their mourning into ioy, & will comfort them, and
giue them ioy for their sorrowes.*

Heere many others do endeuour themselves,
to make an opposition in this manner. As the
flowing of milke and hony (say they) is taken in
the Scripture, for the abundance of all things
neces-

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necessary to the humane life; so the *Dance* is put in that Text for the greatnes of ioy. But let them marke, or remember one thing: The wordes must be vnderstood in an other sense, when they are repugnant vnto reason: but the word *Dance*, is not repugnant vnto reason, in that text of *Jeremie* aboue recited.

To what estates the Dances are thought
to be more becomming.

IF wee will but marke meanely well a little part of the 15. Chap. of *Exodus* already mentioned, it shall be sufficiently manifest vnto vs, that the *Israelitish* women *Danced* with *Miriam* the Prophetesse, for that they were moued and brought to it by the sayd *Miriam*, which began to *Dance*, and was the leader of them. Whereby wee shall remaine fully perswaded, that those women did not embolden them selues towardes that exercise, in the presence of her, which was aboue them in dignitie, vntill they were bidden and inuited to it by her example.

And

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And this doth cause the opinions of many Learned men to be, that such an exercise is rather appertayning to the Nobilitie and Gentilitie, then to the other estates: and that the inferiours ought not to vse it among the superiours, nor in the presence of them, except the superiours doe bidde or inuite the inferiours to the same, whether it be by speach, or otherwise. Concluding thereupon, that same Art to be much abused in our age, because (say they) it is practised by a great many, without any discretion at all.

Let vs giue some insight to a few words of the 11. Chap. of *Iudges*, which wee haue alledged in another line of this Treatise. No mention is made of any person in those Dances, but of the daughter of *Iephthah*, which was Captaine over the people of *Israel*. Doth not this argue with great probabilitie, that the said daughter of *Iephthah*, was the moouer and guider of that dancing, as shee was the highest in estate and condition among her fellowes? And doth it not by consequence come to agree with that purpose, which now we haue holden in a brief deduction, a very little before, about the dauncing of *Miriam* the Prophetesse with the other women of *Israel*? None extraordinarie sharpnesse, or viucitile of wit is necessarie, to make it enter into the

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the comprehension of that point.

We haue already touched the fiftenth chapter of the Booke of *Iudeth*, which wee must touch againe at this present time, vpon the discourse which we haue in hand. For these words are written in the end of it, concerning the sayde most honorable *Iudeth*, *They also crowned her with Oliues, and her that was with her, and shee went before the people in the Dance, leading all the Women.* Which words do greatly augment, without any part of doubt, the strength and vigour of our argumentation: to wit, that the *Dances* do not seeme to become so well the lower sort, as the higher: and that we may thinke according vnto reason, to be somewhat inconvenient for the lower, to haue the exercitation of dancing neere the higher, vlesse some leaue be giuen of these vnto those, one way or other. And here vnto this very short addition, as we do perswade our selues, cannot bee but fitly applied: that by the Histories of daunces contained in the holy Scripture, it seemeth vnto the consideration of many godly persons, that the practise of *Dancing* is more becoming vnto women, then vnto men.

Why

D

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Why Dances are forbidden in some
places among the Christians.



The prohibition of Dances in Geneva, & in some other Territories, which do keepe all the orders of the same in matters of Religion, and Ecclesiasticall Discipline, was made because of the great abuses of them: to cut off the pernicious cuils, which oftentimes happened thereby. Is not this a sufficient argument, to prooue such an action to be good? Behold, our *Mesias* in the 18. Chap. of the Gospel according to *S. Matthew*, doeth command euery one of vs, to cast away his hand, or his foote, or his eye; if they cause him to offend: saying, that it is better, to enter into life, with one hand, or with one foote, or with one eye, then hauing two hands, or two feete, or two eyes, to be cast into euerlasting fire. Therefore if in that case we must needs be deprived of things, which are so much profitable & necessarie: why should those nations haue refused to suppress a thing, which among them was become altogether vaine

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vaine and prophane?

We read in the 21. Chap. of *Numbers*, that *Moses* by the commandement of God, did make a Serpent of Brasse, and erected it for a signe vnto the *Israelites*. And we read in the 18. Chap. of the second Booke of *Kings*, that the religious King *Hezekiah* did beat downe, and breake in peeces the sayd Brasen Serpent, because he saw that the people of *Israel* continued yet to adore the same, in burning Incense vnto it. If then it haue been lawfull, to abolish the Sacrament of God, in consideration that it was abused; why should it not be lawfull, to put away the inuentions of men for the like cause?

Me thinketh it were enough, to make vs leaue and forsake the vsage of such *Dances*, as are onely effected for the pleasure of our eyes, to obserue and consider with studious diligence one thing in the 14. chap. of the Apostle *S. Matthew*, How that through the meanes & occasion of a *Dance*, *S. Iohn Baptist* was put to death: which was a most excellent Prophet, & a most faythfull forerunner of our Sauiour *Iesus Christ*. To whom, with the *Father*, and the *Spirit*, be all magnificence, and glorie perpetually. *Amen.*

FINIS.

